

ECCELESIASTICAL ART REVIEW

OCTOBER, 1928

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Marble and Marble Altars

NY discussion of marble quickly leads to superlatives. Marble is the most decorative of all stones and due to its ready adaptability to plans which contemplate either or elaborate enrichment or both, it has

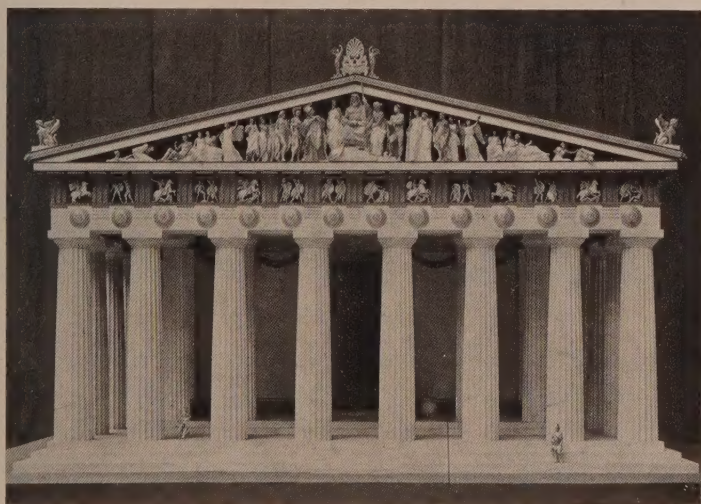
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d and talented craftsmen, its value as a
r for aesthetical expression is beyond
an.

on the very dawn of civilization marble
ee esteemed for its beauty. The ancient
tions, Herodotus says cased many of the
his in marble of dazzling brightness.
Geeks and Romans used it for their
works and it is a well known fact that
ummarble and its enduring qualities the

story of Ancient Greece and Rome would not
be known so well as it is today. Practically
all of the classic temples of Greece and Rome
so famous for their beauty and antiquity
which today attract visitors from all parts of
the world are structures of marble and speak

eloquently for its
beauty, durabil-
ity and perma-
nence.



The Parthenon of Ancient Greece

White Marble Most Popular

The most es-
teemed of all
marbles has al-
ways been the
white or the
white with slight
vein. Three
kinds of white
marble have
made history and

to this day have no equal because of their
hardness and the compactness of their crystal-
line structure. These three white marbles are
known as Pentelic, Parian and Carrara.
Pentelic white was used in the Grecian tem-
ples while Parian white marble was chosen
for those famous sculptures of classic beauty
which acclaim the Greeks as the most cul-
tured people of their time. Pentelic Marble
was quarried at Mt. Pentelicus in Attica while

Parian Marble came from the Island of Paros. These beautiful white marbles were preferred to all others by the greatest sculptors of Athens including Phidias, Polyclethus and Praxiteles. Fragments of the frieze of the Parthenon, carved of Pentelic Marble which are prized as representing the actual style of Phidias are said to hold the extreme place among existing works of sculpture. With the conquest of Greece, the Romans quickly absorbed the culture of the Athenians and strove for artistic achievement by bringing to Rome sculptors and marble craftsmen both for the purpose of erecting beautiful monuments in the Imperial City and also to teach to the Romans their arts and crafts.

Although marble was quarried at Carrara since B. C. 173, its use was restricted on account of the popularity of Pentelic and Parian Marbles

and the more ready accessibility of the latter quarries. However, the best grades of Parian gradually became exhausted and Carrara Marble though difficult to obtain from its almost inaccessible quarries slowly came into use. With the rise of Christian Rome and the later advent of the more modern sculptors Carrara Marble was used almost exclusively. It was chosen for their best work by such artists as Michael Angelo, Canova and Bernini.

The Superiority of Carrara

The statuary marble of Greece while popular in its day does not compare with Carrara for average purposes. It is said to be indeed

probable that the discovery of one led to the use of the other. Both Parian and Carrara are extremely hard and the large inclusions of crystals contained in them make them intricate and difficult to work. They emit sparks when being roughed down and tend to quickly blunted and broken. Pentelic is particularly difficult to work and the action of the weather on the surface eats away the softer layers and leaves the harder standing, a condition to which Carrara is subject owing to its closer and more uniform grain. The glory of Grecian Marble is the past. Carrara which undoubtedly



Detail of Carved Marble, Gothic Design

Carrara Marble which are classed according to their degree of purity and the fineness of grain. For the best work in sculpture the popular grades are Statuary Carrara, P. Primissima, Bianco P. and Bianco First Quality. The first three named are particularly suited to fine statuary making, while the latter two are especially adapted to the requirements of the beautiful and artistic.

All Carrara of above grades is of even grain of splendid density and when broken will show a sparkling fracture of sugary whiteness. The degree of whiteness varies from a cream to a bluish tone the bluish tint being present in the grades of the g

have been the choice of ancient sculptors. It has been acknowledged in their works as the most valuable white marble of all.

Different Grades of Marble

There are great grades of

Quite naturally all marble, even from the same quarry is not of equally desirability, and the quarried blocks are not only according to their degree of excellence as described by the names given to them, but in addition each class is again arranged in grades according to the excellence of the stock. This explains the great difference in the prices which often develops in the bidding on marble work. The artist without reputation does not fail to take advantage of the "cheaper stock" on every quarry regardless of the ultimate satisfaction it will cause. Reputable studios, on the other hand, do not choose marble blocks that consist as a practical matter of all the elements of trouble and from the quarry to the uniform tone of white.

Selecting the Marble Blocks

A studio striving for artistic perfection in marble sculptures will select its blocks carefully. A dull or cloudy day is deemed when stock is being selected as veined and discolorations are difficult to detect on the days. If no rain has recently fallen the blocks are sprayed with water in order to reveal possible any veins or stains that might exist. Blocks are then slung and struck with a hammer and only accepted when a soft, ringing sound is heard, showing the material to be free from serious flaws. If the sound of the blow is dull and heavy there is evidence of cracks and if a hard and metallic

sound is emitted the material will not work well. These defects naturally affect the grade and material of this kind lands in the studios of the less particular marble concerns.

The smooth even texture of Carrara is what makes the marble so suited to statuary and fine altar work. As an authority on this subject recently stated "The best white Carrara Marbles are eminently suited for sculpture. In no other material is it possible for the conception of the artist to be reproduced in permanent form with such satisfactory result. The hardness of these marbles and the fineness of their grain give effect to the most delicate touches of the chisel. The purity of the white marble is in itself an aid to the grace and beauty of the composition. It has one distinct advantage over bronze or any material which requires to be cast. The last



Detail of Carved Marble, Studios of Daprato Statuary Company

touches in marble are those of the artist himself; in all cast work they are perforce those of the founder and his men."

touches in marble are those of the artist himself; in all cast work they are perforce those of the founder and his men."

Choosing the Artist

After being assured the best grade and quality of marble, the prospective purchaser must take steps to make certain that the carving will be performed by a talented artist. Of sculptors there are all grades from the ordinary carver of mediocre ability whose services can be obtained for a very small wage to the master of the art, the professor who often has been the recipient of rewards and decorations for the excellence of his work. Here again the reputation of the studios determines the skill of the artist that will be employed

and the degree of excellence attained in the quality of carving and execution.

So great is the difference in the quality of work in the execution of sculptures of marble it behooves each purchaser to investigate carefully before taking steps which may end in everlasting regret. Structures of marble as a rule are of such importance and involve so great an expense to produce it is rarely possible to replace them once erected and mistakes in quality of material or imperfection in design or execution can seldom be corrected.

For the prospective buyer of marble work such as altars and statues there is only one safe rule to follow and that is to deal solely with reputable studios, whose facilities may be judged by numerous examples of completed productions which will stand the test of the closest examination. The pitfalls for the unwary which are to be guarded against are; unsound marble or imperfect colored marble, inferior carving, careless jointing and faulty color combination. Most serious of course is that part of the work affected by the degree of artistic and mechanical skill involved in carving and joining. Many marble altars, quite handsome at a distance due to a massing of color and ornament do not bear close inspection. These unfortunate examples of misplaced confidence sadly enough are quite common and result from too much faith being placed in the promises of marble contractors whose lack of experience and limited facilities make them unfit for the exacting requirements of what may be termed the finest of the fine arts.

Artistic Technique

It may be stated with absolute certainty that marble working such as is involved in the embellishment of buildings by means of panels and columns does not begin to test the skill and artistic technique essential to the successful creation of works of art such as altars of exquisite beauty. The truly

ful altar should display a kind of carving which characterized the great masters of Greek and Roman sculpture. An examination of the monuments to be seen in our museums showing the work of sculptors of ancient times will convince even the most skeptical that much of the carved work of the present reveals hurried and a glossing over of important details and a skimping on carvings that denote a greater desire for personal gain than artistic achievement. The cornices and capitals of classic sculpture can be found fully executed with details completely rounded, undercut or treated according to the requirements of the motif.

This is the kind of work that stamps the master

such and separates the work of the artist from that of the mechanic. Most of the ornamental details of the average marble altar conform to the technical description of "high relief" in this type of carving the projection of a feature from the ground or plane on which it is formed is at least one half of its circumference from the background. Sculptors imbued with high ideals with scrupulous fidelity to the honor of their profession develop carvings of this type to the full



Two Marble Capitals which show a great difference in quality of execution. They were carved by different studios, both using the same design.

ing, if possible, each detail of ornamental achievement in itself. Less than this marble concerns seeking con-
ow bids furnish without hesitation
orts to be high relief carving with
utlines of the ornament cut, and in-
no more actual chiselling than
hoped will pass the inspection of
many of whom, lacking experi-
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Perhaps the best
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Colored Marbles

Color knowledge is another important es-
sential to fine altar making. With but few
exceptions the great majority of white marble
altars whether rich or plain are relieved by
the use of colored marbles either in the panels
or columns, usually both. Artistic taste and
developed color knowledge finds in the match-
ing, blending or contrasting of marbles a task

of unlimited possibil-
ities. The best designed
altar may be marred if
handled in its execu-
tion without adequate
knowledge of correctly
applied color tech-
nique while on the
other hand surpass-
ingly beautiful results
are the reward of the
color expert who thor-
oughly understands
this important branch
of the art.

The Studios of Da-
prato Statuary Com-
pany, long exponents
of the principle that
the very best is the least
expensive in Ecclesias-
tical Art can point
with pardonable pride
to genuine artistic



*Detail of Marble Carving from the Studios of
Daprato Statuary Company*

models of the important details of
the architect's design. These models will
disclose evidence of the sincerity or
profit, of the bidder in his claim to
the best workmanship, will also serve
as a guide in judging the faithfulness of the
carving out its specifications as con-

achievement in their numerous productions of
marble. In this publication will be seen a few
examples of masterful execution which may
be subjected to the closest examination and
scrutiny with every assurance that the ulti-
mate verdict will reflect credit on the ideals
of the organization whose excellent facilities
made them possible.

F. J. WAINDLE.



MARBLE MAIN ALTAR

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Springfield, Ill.

In the reredos of this altar, Black and Gold Marble forms a dark but rich background from which rises an inlaid gold mosaic. The striking contrast of the gold and black, the colorful brilliance and beauty of the mosaic form a setting of rare splendor for the altar proper, which in itself is a most artistic creation of exquisitely matched colored marbles in coral pinks, greens, reds and yellows. This superb work of art was designed by Joe W. McCarthy, Architect, Chicago. Produced in the studios of Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE SIDE ALTAR

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Springfield, Ill.

ure cannot do justice to the outstanding elegance of an altar as beautiful as this. Black and Gold Marble
 and by an ornamental cresting of gold bronze forms a background for a most artistic pictorial mosaic
 and with inlaid gold. Designed by Joe W. McCarthy, Architect, Chicago. Executed in the studios of
 Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



BLACK AND GOLD MARBLE PULPIT

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Springfield, Ill.

A pulpit in which a design of severe simplicity gives prominence to all the possibilities of brilliant gold mosaic inlaid on a background of Black and Gold Marble. It is a product of the studios of Daprato Statuary Company. Design by Joe W. McCarthy, Architect.



SHRINE OF ST. ANN

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Springfield, Ill.

Group of pure white Carrara carved by a master sculptor is in itself a work of art but when erected in a setting of Gold Marble as seen above, its beauty is accentuated in the extreme. This lovely masterpiece is a product of the studios of Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.

**MARBLE MAIN ALTAR**

St. Joan of Arc's Church, Mobile, Ala., Rev. E. B. Kennedy, Pastor.

Symbolic of the purity of true faith, this altar with its sculptures is entirely of white Carrara Marble. Its design gives interesting expression to the sacredness of its purpose. Beautifully carved, with statues artistically wrought it is a production of rare beauty. Produced in its entirety in the studios of Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE MAIN ALTAR

St. James' Church, Medford, Mass.

natural beauty of selected white Carrara marble makes possible in this simple design, an altar of inspiring refinement. With the limited ornamentation exquisitely carved, it is fashioned along lines that suggest chasteness. It is a product of the studios of Daprato Statuary Company. Designed in collaboration with Edward T. P. Graham, Architect, Boston, Mass.



MARBLE MAIN ALTAR

Blessed Sacrament Church, Kansas City, Mo., Rev. Francis G. McCaffrey, Pastor.

Resplendent with the rich beauty of artfully matched white and colored marbles and handsomely embellished with sparkling Venetian mosaics, this altar with its carved and inscribed religious symbolisms suggests the realization of an artistic ideal. The arch of white marble is ornamented with Venetian mosaics in colors and gold as are the tabernacle and the risers of candlesteps. The columns supporting the arched canopy are of selected Piastrella marble while the center panel of reredos is entirely of Cream Paonazzo Marble. Specially designed and executed by Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE SIDE ALTAR

Blessed Sacrament Church, Kansas City, Mo.

of rare quality unfolds truly inspiring beauty in this splendid creation of marble. Matching the main altar
richness of marbles and mosaics, this stately production adds dignity to the beautifully sculptured
statue of snowy Carrara. Specially designed and executed by Daprato Statuary
Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE ALTAR AND RAILING

St. James' Church, Kansas City, Mo., Rev. J. W. Keyes, Pastor.

Suggesting refined elegance in the exquisite artistry of its composition, this altar on close inspection displays a profusion of delicately carved ornament. It is an exceedingly beautiful altar and a most interesting example of the possibilities of Gothic design when masterfully interpreted. Specially designed and executed by Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE MAIN ALTAR

St. Mary's College Chapel, Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Ind.

ty in art as expressed by this delightful creation of marble reveals a simple but artistic design flawlessly executed
maculate Carrara. In pleasing contrast with the white marble are seen columns of Mexican Onyx in the
pendium and exposition. Both altar and angels were designed and executed by Daprato Statuary
Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.

**CIBORIUM ALTAR**

St. Benedict's Church, Evansville, Ind.

A magnificent structure, beautifully proportioned and artistically executed. It is 39 feet high and 18 feet wide. The monoliths are of Piastraccia marble, the plinths and the base of steps are of Black and Gold marble while the altar proper is of White Carrara embellished with Paonazzo and Red Verona marbles. Designed in collaboration with Thole & Legeman, Architects, Evansville, Ind. Executed by Daprato Statuary Company.



MARBLE MAIN ALTAR

St. Mary's Church, New Castle, Pa., Very Rev. F. F. O'Shea, LL.D., V.F., Pastor.

surmounted by a cross and flanked by a multitude of spires and numerous gothic pinnacles, all reaching upward, as it were, give to this stately altar a pleasing devotional aspect. It is of white and colored Carrara marbles, artistically carved and executed. Product of the studios of Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE STATUE AND PEDESTAL

Good Samaritan Hospital Chapel, Cincinnati, Ohio.

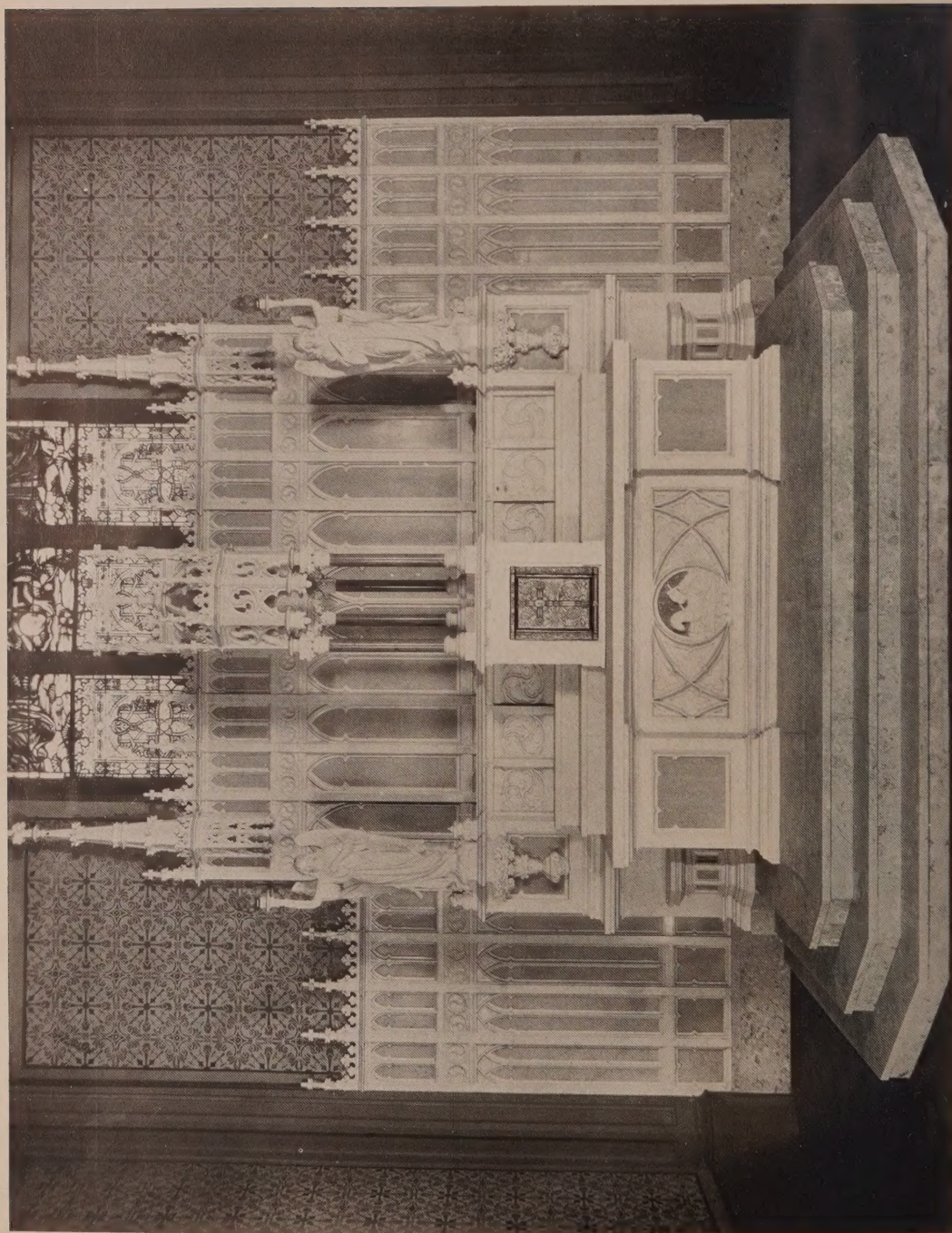
Statues and pedestals even when located in an obscure corner of the church deserve to be selected with as great marks the choice of the most important furnishings. As shown in this illustration, a beautiful statue with artistic pedestal can be made to form a shrine of most attractive religious appeal. Both the statue and pedestal shown, works of art in marble, are productions of the studios of Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



MARBLE PULPIT

St. Jean Baptiste Church, Quebec, P. Q., Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. E. Laberge, Pastor.

Beauty and artistic excellence are revealed in this lofty pulpit of marble. It is a creation of great attractive-
sculptured ornament boldly executed and brilliant with bright colored marbles. The pulpit proper is
feet high while the canopy supported by life size angels reaches the unusual height of twenty seven
feet. The baldachin is of Rialto ornamented with mosaic. Specially designed and executed by
Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Montreal, Pietrasanta, Italy.



STONE ALTAR



IN order to achieve perfection in rendering true Religious Art, many of the medieval craftsmen, some of them monks in the service of the church, devoted their entire lives to the pursuit of a single ideal. With patience, perseverance and an indomitable will added to an earnest faith and a natural gift of talent and skill, they accomplished rare wonders in art and architecture.

These valiant pioneers of the middle ages honored both God and man in the noble creations of their artistic genius and the results of their labors will for all time serve to inspire their fellow men.

From the splendid examples of their achievements, how evident to all is the priceless heritage of a correctly planned and beautifully appointed house of worship! Whether large or small, each church of our own times should strive to demonstrate in its planning the same earnestness of purpose which characterized these masterful craftsmen who so effectively worked for the honor and glory of God.

The Studios of Daprato Statuary Company, ever anxious to serve in this cause, offer exceptional facilities to any who may be interested in the following productions:

ALTARS	}	Marble, Scagliola, Rigalico
ALTAR RAILINGS		
PULPITS		
STATUES—Marble, Orbronzes, Cement, Composition		
STATIONS OF THE CROSS—(Groups and Relief)		
CEMETERY GROUPS—Marble, Orbronzes, Cement		
WINDOWS—Stained Antique Glass of Exceptional* Workmanship		
SOUNDING BOARDS—Daprato Patented Adjustment		
TREASURY LOCK STEEL TABERNACLE SAFES		
BAPTISMAL FONTS—Marble, Composition		
SHRINES—Marble, Scagliola, Rigalico		
CHRISTMAS CRIBS—Composition		

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DETAIL OF STAINED GLASS WINDOW

depicting scene of The Apparition of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary.
St. Joseph's Hospital Chapel, San Francisco, Calif.

A masterful work in Stained Glass in which are seen figures of rare beauty and proportion on a background with wonderful color technique. Specially designed and executed by Daprato Studios, Chicago, New